

STATINTL

Should Fulbright Be Muzzled?

Senator J. William Fulbright unburdened his bosom the other day on the floor of the Senate. Picking out a target he thought he could handle, he lit into the Young Americans for Freedom, accusing them of having persuaded Firestone to give up a plan to show Rumania how to build synthetic rubber plants, accusing Firestone of having kowtowed to demagoguery, accusing YAF of extremism and irresponsibility. . . .

It was quite a performance. It was full of arrogance, which is the sin of intellect; and of sarcasm, which is the humor of arrogance; and of spite, which is the anger of little people. It earned Fulbright the applause of Senator Wayne Morse and Senator Mike Mansfield (who, we fervently hope, had slept as Fulbright spoke, and gave a strictly Pavlovian partisan boost), and of course Page One in the *Fits that Get Printed*.

Fulbright covered eight pages in the *Congressional Record* making these two points (if we discard the vilification): 1) foreign policy is exclusively the concern of the Federal Government, and 2) the Constitution denies citizens the right to proceed as YAF proceeded. "They would do well to read the Constitution of the United States," said Mr. Fulbright. "It would be well for them to read the Constitution of the United States," said Mr. Mansfield. "Yes," said Mr. Fulbright. This brilliant passage may be found in the *Record*, page 17616.

Well, Mr. Fulbright is off base on both counts, the way we see it, and YAF comes out clear ahead. YAF's reply, charging Fulbright with "bad information, bad timing, and bad taste," was perfect, and perfectly in order. Fulbright may be able to muzzle the military, but he's not able to muzzle the whole country, or even 27 million Goldwater voters, or 30,000 members of YAF. Telling the opposition to shut up is a totalitarian trick, and Mr. Fulbright shows large chunks of the tyrant in his make-up.

Should Fulbright be muzzled, though? Of course not. But he *should* be curbed. Others have to use the sidewalks too, you know.